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Water Levels for the Great Lakes and Montreal Harbour ... *a monthly bulletin from Canadian Hydrographic Service*

About the monthly Water Level bulletin

August Precipitation Over the Great Lakes

As a percentage of the long-term August average:

Great Lakes Basin	106%
Lake Erie (including Lake St. Clair)	119%
Lake Superior	116%
Lakes Michigan-Huron	99%
Lake Ontario	94%

Note: These figures are preliminary.

August Outflows

Volume 8, Number 9 **September 8, 2000**

Water Supplies Vary by Lake Basin

Upper Lakes Reach Peak Summer Level

Water supplies during August were greater than average on the basins of Lakes Erie and Ontario, but were below average on the Lakes Superior and Michigan-Huron basins.

Daily waters levels on Lakes Superior and Michigan-Huron rose slightly during the first half of August, but fell gradually during the later half of the month suggesting that the upper lakes may have reached their seasonal peaks for the year.

Rather than rising slightly as it usually does during August, Lake Superior ended the month 2 cm lower than it was at the beginning of the month. Lake Superior began September about 27 cm below its long-term average, about 15 cm below its level of last year.

Although the monthly mean level of Lakes Michigan-Huron remained unchanged from July to August, the lakes declined by a near-average amount of 3 cm from the beginning to the end of August. Lakes Michigan-Huron remain about 47 cm below average, about 19 cm below their level of a year ago, but still 35 cm above their record minimum for this time of year.

Water levels on Lakes St. Clair and Erie declined by near-average amounts during August, falling 10 cm and 6 cm, respectively. Lake Ontario's level fell slightly more than average during August, declining 20 cm. At the beginning of September, Lake St. Clair was 13 cm below average, Lake Erie was 3 cm below average, and Lake Ontario was 13 cm above average.

During August, Montréal Harbour's water level was 12 cm below average, 100 cm above last year's level.

The level of Lake Superior is expected to remain about the same in September while those of the other lakes are expected to decline during the month. The most probable supplies forecast indicates that the Montréal Harbour's monthly mean level will decrease in September and remain below average, but above chart datum.

Boat Haul-Out

From the Great Lakes

As a percentage of the long-term August average:

Lake Superior	91%
Lake Erie	97%
Lake Huron	83%
Lake Ontario	100%

Note: These figures are preliminary.

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Summary information for "LEVEL*news*"

With the cooler air temperatures in early September, some recreational boaters have already begun hauling their boats out of the water for the season. Others, however, would prefer to stay on the lakes and rivers a bit longer. Recreational boaters on Lakes Superior, Michigan-Huron and St. Clair should be aware that water levels on these lakes are below average and declining. Water levels on Lakes Superior and Michigan-Huron could fall below chart datum as early as October. Although conditions on Lake Erie, Lake Ontario, or the upper St. Lawrence River are not as problematic, we advise boaters throughout the Great Lakes system to pay close attention to water levels. Low water level conditions may make it more difficult, and perhaps more costly, to haul boats out.

Lake Superior Activities

Lake Superior outflows are expected to be as specified by the lake's regulation plan for the coming months.

Environment Canada and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers conducted flow measurements in the St. Marys River during August. These flow measurements are part of a long-term program to improve the rating for the Compensating Works. The rating gives flows corresponding to various gate open patterns at the structure and Lake Superior water levels.

Lake Ontario Activities

The International St. Lawrence River Board of Control will continue to release Lake Ontario outflows as specified by the lake's regulation plan except during certain conditions. Higher outflows using the 6 cm water stored on Lake Ontario are permitted to provide relief to hydropower and navigation that are seriously affected by low water levels and flows in the St. Lawrence River. Earlier this year, the Board had stored some water on Lake Ontario by flowing less than specified by the lake's regulation plan.

On September 7, the St. Lawrence Board held its second public teleconference this year connecting Toronto, Cornwall, Montreal, Rochester and Alexandria Bay. The event provided the public with an opportunity to communicate with the Board on water level issues. It also enabled the various user groups in the Lake Ontario - St. Lawrence River system to listen to, and talk with one another about their particular needs and concerns related to water levels.

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